

Follow-up Report USS Rainier Beach Cleanup 29 April 1999

**Spill date: May 1997
Project date: September 1997
After Action Report Submitted: October 1997**

**Presented to: Washington State Department of Ecology
Resource Damage Assessment Committee**

**Presented by: Navy Region Northwest
Naval On-Scene Coordinator**

Background: On May 27, 1997, USS RAINIER, AOR 7, while berthed at pier D at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard released approximately 50 gallons of bilge water mixed with and JP-5 fuel while removing bilge from pumping hoses. On July 9, 1997, the Washington Resource Damage Assessment Committee met and approved a restoration project to provide full compensation for natural resource damages resulting from the May 27th spill.

The project, conducted in September 1997, entailed the use of hand labor to remove trash and debris from approximately three (3) linear miles of exposed beach and tidal lagoons on and adjacent to Navy property on the Toandoes Peninsula. Limited land access to the site is available by only a crude unpaved road. Therefore, the access for the transportation of materials and personnel was by water.

The cleanup was accomplished with 40 crewmembers of the USS RAINIER, who were divided into four teams. The cleanup crew was instructed not to pick up anything too large to safely carry or to be dangerous in any way. Any item that appeared to be hazardous was to be marked for future action. (No hazardous items were found.) All trash and debris was also removed via flat bottom boats. All activity on the water was timed carefully with the tides. Tidal information and weather reports were reviewed 12 hours in advance of deployment of personnel.

A total of 2.8 miles of shoreline and 1.3 acres of foreshore beach grass marsh were cleaned of debris. Twenty eight tires, one abandoned refrigerator, and a 10 yard dumpster full of miscellaneous debris were removed. The tires were recycled by the Naval Submarine Base, Bangor, the refrigeration was recycled as scrap metal, (after it was determined that it no ozone depleting substances were still present), and the remainder was handled as solid waste.

Results of Follow-up Survey. On November 1997, the Committee asked to Navy to conduct a follow-up beach survey (after a winter storm season) to determine the effectiveness of beach cleanups in this area. On April 23, 1999, the Navy conducted such a survey. Two winter storm seasons have passed since the beach cleanup by the crew of the USS RAINIER. The winter of 1998/99 was warmer and much wetter than average.

The beach area showed erosion, a number of small landslides, and two major slides. Marsh area also some signs of vegetation die back. Some minor debris had washed up on the beach, but this was minimal. Some aluminum cans and several bottles were noted. No tires or unusual foreign objects were seen. No ropes, lines, or clam nets were seen in the area. Taking into account that two winters had passed by since the cleanup, the beach area remained relatively clear of trash and debris.

A number of birds were noted in the grassy marsh area.

Survey was conducted by Mr. Sven Eklof, Navy Region Northwest, Regional Oil and hazardous substance Spill Coordinator. Photographs of the follow-up survey follow.